

Sandy Springs to Assess Floodplain, Redraw Maps

In the United States and in Georgia, flooding is the number one natural disaster. To identify flood hazards and the risks they pose, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) develops flood hazard maps, officially known as Flood Insurance Rate Maps or FIRMS.

FEMA is now working with the State and the City of Sandy Springs to update or revise the FIRMS from Buford Dam to Coweta County, which includes the City of Sandy Springs. This will produce a better assessment of the Chattahoochee River Basin's current flood risk and will allow officials to develop a more comprehensive approach to mitigate damage brought on by flooding.

The new flood maps are targeted to become effective in the fall of 2011. Prior to that, residents are urged to attend regular meetings, voice their opinions during the review and comment period and investigate flood insurance requirements. Some property owners with mortgages may face new flood insurance requirements while others may find the requirements have been lifted. Flood insurance is a federally underwritten program that can help property owners repair or replace their structures and belongings after a flood. The National Flood Insurance Program has "grandfathering" rules to recognize policy holders who bought or kept coverage prior to the redrawing of the maps, which could result in a savings.

For additional information about Georgia's map modernization project, visit www.georgiaDFIRM.com. For more information about flood insurance, visit www.floodsmart.gov. For more information on Sandy Springs flood maps, visit www.sandyspringsga.org.



Political Signs Regulated By Sign Ordinance

With political primaries just around the corner, remember even though political signage is not directly addressed in the sign ordinance; all signage is regulated through the following measures:

SIGN LOCATION

- No sign can be placed in the public Rights-of-Way of the City.
- Signs may not constitute a traffic hazard.
- No sign may be located any closer than 20 feet to an intersection as measured from the intersection of the two rights-of-way.
- Signs will be considered out of the right-of-way if the sign is located:

- 1) At least 10 feet from the edge of pavement, or
- 2) Behind the utility poles that are along the streets and roads.

**Signs placed in front of the utility poles or attached to any utility pole, as well as signs closer than 10 feet to the edge of pavement will be removed by Sandy Springs Code Enforcement officers or Public Works contractors and discarded.*

A Standard Informational sign is a sign with an area of not greater than four square feet, with a sign face made for short term use, containing no reflecting elements, flags or projections and which, when erect, stands at a height not greater than three feet and is mounted on a stake or metal frame with a thickness or diameter not greater than one and one-half inches.

Each lot may display two Standard Informational Signs without a permit, except that during a political election, between the date of qualification and final determination on each ballot issue or candidate, each lot may display an unlimited number of Standard Informational Signs. Political signs should be removed after the election has concluded.

Scholarships continued from page 2

Scholarships are available for students ages four–17 and distributed through the non-profit organization, the Friends of Sandy Springs. They are awarded on a first come, first served basis and are only awarded once per calendar year per participant.

Requests for scholarships must be submitted to the Hammond Park Gymnastics Center located at 705 Hammond Drive, Sandy Springs, Ga., 30328 with proof of residency and a letter from the school's cafeteria proving that the participant receives free/reduced lunch. Scholarships may be used for the following programs: basketball, gymnastics, soccer, baseball, softball, tennis, drama, summer camp and football. A committee of recreation and parks staff review applications and makes the determination on who receives the scholarships.

If you are interested in the scholarship program and one of the recreation programs listed above, please visit www.sandyspringsga.org, call 770-730-5600 or speak with your school counselor. If you would like to contribute to the Friends of Sandy Springs Scholarship Program, mail your check, made out to FOSS, to 7840 Roswell Road, Building 500, Sandy Springs, Ga., 30350.

Contact Us

Sandy Springs Website: www.sandyspringsga.org
Sandy Springs Citizen Response Center: 770.730.5600

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this document is available in alternate formats by contacting the ADA Compliance Officer at 770-206-1544.

SANDY

SPRINGSTIMES

Your Sandy Springs News Source

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Greetings!



There is both good and not so good news about the City of Sandy Springs budget for next fiscal year, which begins July first. The good news first: We will not have an increase in City property tax! Our rate is fixed in our City Charter at 4.731 mills and will stay the same. Moreover, many homeowners have received notices from the Fulton County Tax Assessor's office reducing the assessed value of homes. That could mean a tax cut in your eventual 2010 property tax bill, except for the unwelcome news that the Fulton County School Board is planning a tax rate increase. Nothing is certain yet about the third entity on your property tax bill—Fulton County. However, since the bulk of your property tax represents the billing from the County and the School Board, their actions may end up offsetting a possible reduction.

More good news: City service levels will stay the same. The wonderful service we have seen from our Police and Fire Departments will continue. No serious reductions are contemplated in other service areas of the City. Indeed, recreation programs are slated to expand. Many of these are user-fee based, but no fee increases are expected, except for registrants from outside Fulton County, who participate in these offerings. The remarkable fact is that the City has been able to slash building and development permit fees in half, stimulating construction. That will continue for the immediate future.

Now for the not so good news: The City will cut back on capital expenditures. With reduced revenue (due to the expected reductions in property tax receipts), we cannot continue the ambitious levels of paving and sidewalk expenditures. We will continue paving, and building new sidewalks, but at a reduced rate. The streets that are in the worst shape will be the ones that get paved first. No paving or sidewalk projects are ever chosen to satisfy any particular constituency. Objective policies are used.

Stormwater or faulty drainage issues will be addressed in our capital project list. It is the City policy to fix stormwater systems that cause sink holes or flooding where the fault lies on City rights of way. While our neighborhood sidewalk project expenditure level is less than we would like it to be, there will be a major sidewalk expenditure on Roswell Road from Dalrymple north to the River. This is financed with federal funds with strict rules on where such funding may be used.

While we had to reduce new capital projects, we still have quite a backlog that are funded from previous years. One of these is the high priority fix of the Roswell Road bridge over I-285, which causes the congestion in our downtown area. We are still waiting for final approval by the Georgia Department of Transportation for this important project. Also, on the backlog are various streetscape improvements in the downtown area. As the City moves forward with better sidewalks, street lamps and landscaping in our downtown area, it is our fervent hope that the downtown property owners will also move forward to assemble and redevelop properties that are outdated.

I'm happy to report another year of progress.

Eva Galambos

Mayor Eva Galambos, PhD
City of Sandy Springs

City's Water Conservation Efforts Include Rain Sensors

The City of Sandy Springs passed an ordinance that now requires all new commercial and residential irrigation systems to install a rain sensor shut-off and/or freeze sensor shut-off valve.

The goal of the ordinance is to promote water conservation by establishing water rules for year round water conservation, to promote the efficient use of water, to reduce or eliminate the waste of water in the City and to enable implementation of the City's water shortage contingency measures.

The Mayor and Council recognize through water conservation and efficiency, other cities have achieved significant reductions in water use, and the City can benefit from setting water conservation benchmarks and goals.

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City Partners With GDOT to Expand Roswell Road Bridge Over I-285



By adding additional width on the northbound (east) side of the existing Roswell Road bridge over I-285, the City of Sandy Springs and the Georgia Department of Transportation hope to reduce traffic congestion and improve safety. The City is working with GDOT staff on the delivery schedule, which could have construction beginning this fall. The current estimated cost of the project is \$4 million.

The City of Sandy Springs and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) are working closely on an aggressive schedule to reduce traffic congestion and improve safety at the Roswell Road/I-285 interchange bridge. The project will include the construction of additional width on the northbound (east) side of the existing bridge. This will allow for two, 11' wide, northbound and southbound travel lanes as well as two full, 11' wide, dedicated left turn lanes onto the entrance ramps for I-285. The current bridge has five, 10' wide, travel lanes. Additional width to the westbound and eastbound on ramps for I-285 will be constructed to accommodate dual ramp meters and additional storage capacity. Short sections of concrete raised median are also proposed at both ends of the bridge to improve operational circulation.

“GDOT has been extremely cooperative and helpful in working with the City of Sandy Springs to make this project a reality,” Mayor Eva Galambos said. “This project will greatly increase the operation and safety of the interchange.”

GDOT is assisting on the pre-construction activities in collaboration with the City to reduce the normal time needed to get a project to construction. The City’s design firm, ARCADIS, and GDOT are working through the complications of adding the width to the existing bridge and are optimizing the plan for construction activities.

The City is working with GDOT staff on the delivery schedule, which could have construction beginning as early as this fall. The current estimated cost of the project is \$4 million and is being partially financed through a federal earmark awarded to the City for improvements to interchanges along I-285.

Scholarships Provide Recreational Opportunities

Several hundred elementary and middle school students are recipients of scholarships to participate in recreation programs through The Sandy Springs Youth Recreation Scholarship Program. The program is a partnership that was established in early 2009 by the Friends of Sandy Springs through an initial grant from Kaiser Permanente and through support of Whole Foods, Publix, IBM and other private donors.

The program provides scholarships to deserving students so they can take part in the Department’s team sports, instructional classes and summer camps. Currently in the City, 53 percent of public school students qualify for the Free/Reduced Lunch Program, where this recreation program draws its participants.

“We greatly appreciate the support from the Friends of Sandy Springs and their local partners in assisting the youth of Sandy Springs,” Sandy Springs Director of Recreation and Parks Ronnie Young said. “This opportunity enables us to award scholarships to deserving children that would otherwise not have the opportunity. This is an investment in our future—these children will be able to participate and gain valuable life lessons.”



The Sandy Springs Youth Recreation Scholarship Program has awarded several hundred elementary and middle school students scholarships to the following recreational programs: basketball, gymnastics, soccer, baseball, softball, tennis, drama, summer camp and football. In order to qualify, students must be residents of Sandy Springs and be on the reduced lunch program in school. Shown here is the popular soccer program.

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EMTs Join SSFRD Ranks



New Sandy Springs EMTs Parker Griffith and Erin Banaszek practice one technique they learned in class: using a C-collar and backboard. They have both taken the EMT class and passed their tests. See last paragraph for all participants who completed the class.

clinicals and medical transport ride-a-longs. National certification assures that EMS personnel providing treatment to patients—at their most critical moment of need—are competent. National certification also establishes standards for training and a valid, uniform process to assess the knowledge and skills required for competent practice required by professionals throughout their careers.

Class began November 1, 2009, and finished on May 7, 2010. They involved 416 classroom hours and 132 clinical hours. Individuals that successfully completed the National Registry’s educational requirements and demonstrated their skills and abilities in the mandated examinations are some of the best trained emergency care providers in the field.

Those completing the class are: Crew Chief James Lauder milk; Fire Rescue Tech II Clinton Strong, Mike Nation, Parker Griffith, Darian Gripper; and Fire Rescue Tech I Brett Fuller, Erin Banaszek, Trenard Foster, Jason Ellis, Joe Hollingshead, Chase Holder, Stephen James and Joey Kendall.

Sandy Springs Fire Rescue has 13 employees who have completed the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) Emergency Medical Technician Intermediate program (EMTI). Through a partnership with Gwinnett College, the Department established a class solely dedicated to SSFR employees that not only work side-by-side while on shift, but in the classroom as well. The program was taught within the NREMT-EMTI curriculum and consisted of classroom lectures, Emergency Room

Rain Sensors continued from page 1

A “rain sensor shut-off switch” means an electronic device that detects and measures rainfall amounts and overrides the cycles of an irrigation system to turn off the system when the predetermined amount of rain has fallen or the temperature has fallen below 32 degrees Fahrenheit (zero degrees Celsius). This does not apply to irrigation systems on golf courses or any other systems dependent on nonpublic water sources.

Inspections for the sensors will be conducted at the final site inspections of permitted projects. Residential and commercial properties installing new irrigation systems will need to submit a plumbing permit.



PD’s STAT Gets First Convictions

Formed just a little more than five months ago, the Sandy Springs Police Department’s Sex Trafficking Assessment Team (STAT) recently scored its first two convictions. Det. Jeff Thomas, who makes up the one-man team, works tirelessly on a mission to combat this growing trend of more than 400 girls each month being commercially sexually exploited in Georgia. The age of entry into prostitution or the commercial sex market for girls and boys is between 11 and 16 years old.

Right now, Det. Thomas’ case load has seven cases open with 18 victims identified. But just as importantly, two offenders have been taken off the streets. One plead guilty to statutory rape, attempted forcible rape and child molestation. He will serve five years. The other plead guilty to statutory rape, aggravated child molestation, pimping and pandering and reckless conduct. He will serve 20 years.

“These cases show that we have a problem, not just in Sandy Springs but across the state and even the nation,” Det. Thomas said. “It also shows that STAT has merit and the City is showing forward thinking and doing something here.”

STAT is a partnership created along with Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta and Governor’s Office for Children and Families. As soon as police officers or detectives of the Sandy Springs Police Department identify a child who they suspect to be a victim of sex trafficking, they will engage the victim advocate; take the child to Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta for a forensic interview and medical exam; and simultaneously refer the child to the Georgia Care Connection Office for treatment services. The Sandy Springs Victim Advocate will stay engaged with the child and his or her family as the investigation proceeds to bring the trafficker to justice. No other comprehensive support system exists in this county for victims of sex trafficking.